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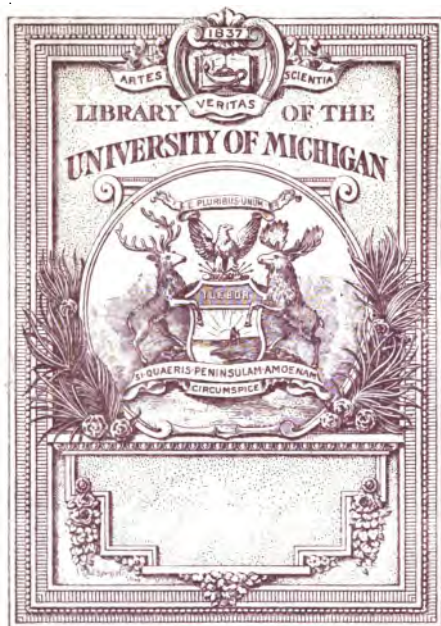
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**HERE'S LUCK TO LORA**  
**AND OTHER POEMS**

BY  
**WILLIAM WALSTEIN GORDAK**



**NEW YORK**  
**BENJ. R. TUCKER**  
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## HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

Here's luck to Lora Vale, where'er she be,  
A-strolling on the beach at Narragansett,  
Or yachting on some alien inland sea,  
Or any other place her fancy fancied  
When whispered she so softly sweet to me,  
And kept her everlasting tongue a-wagging  
About the places where she'd like to be  
With me (and twenty more) around her lagging.

But I perchance forget, — you know her not;  
Then let me now describe to you her eyes:  
Those lovely orbs would wound you on the spot,  
So much of deadly beauty in them lies, —  
Blue as a glimpse of ocean seen afar  
Betwixt the mountains cleft, or as the sky  
When fleecy rifts of summer blown ajar  
Leave glints of cobalt glimmering on high.

And like the golden trailer that runs o'er  
The bloomèd wild briar in the meadow mould,  
The roses of her face, forever pure,  
Are over-blown by shreds of quivering gold;  
And, when each fold is by the sunlight kissed,  
Her locks are like the burnished waves that shine  
When Morning, reddened by the morning mist,  
Moves on with music and a mien divine.

---

HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

---

O Lora, you're a dainty bud half-blown,  
Complexioned like the wingèd cherubim,  
With saucy ways and answers all your own,  
And eyes where tender love-light goes to swim;  
And silken hair ablaze with golden glow,  
And pouting lips as warm as summer clime,  
Dead-ripe and red as damask roses blow  
In breezy June, or any other time.

And you can (with an effort) stand and gaze  
Up in your lover's eyes, as at a star,  
And flatter all his little dapper ways,  
And hold him yet so near and just so far;  
And twine your taper fingers with his own,  
And very sweetly feign to keep for him  
Your honeyed self intact, — for him alone  
Your honeyed sweetness, supple, svelte, and slim.

So luck to Lora Vale, where'er she be,  
Though hearts hung on her girdle she may crave  
As plenteous as scalps that one can see  
Strung on the wampum cestus of a brave;  
And, if before my eyes there comes a blur,  
'Tis nothing but a passing tear for him  
Who some sure day will end himself for her,  
And fill her soft ambition to the brim.

## TWILIGHT

A melancholy light doth show  
The stirless branches through,  
    The pale red light,  
    Which over fadeth into white,  
That deepeneth above with blue.

The glow of the sunset skies —  
    Beautiful, far and strange;  
The suns that not again shall rise;  
    The seasons that must change;  
Delight that passeth like the day;  
    Kisses, embraces, tears;  
The voices haunting us alway,  
    And early love of vanished years;  
Desire and sorrow — at its death —  
    The dying day remembereth.

## A NIGHT OF DREAMS

The gusts upon the window beat no more,  
The clock surceased its moments to fulfil;  
Faint, as if tumbling on some distant shore,  
The stormy ocean rumbled and was still;  
While one by one the weights of slumber fell,  
And sleep was mine that did become me well.

A wistful sleep — a wakeful rest — where dreams  
Came from the struggling stars which through the rifts  
Of scattering clouds showed rare and windy gleams;  
Whilst ever thought in visionary drifts  
Wandered — a frightened field-mouse — when the snow  
Cumbers the roof and piles the croft below.

A tithe of ancient Summer's golden reign,  
Perplexed and broken till its feeble light  
Was lost, and Winter with an icy chain  
Bound fast the world wherein my shuddering sprite  
Sought refuge, mingled with the sombre shade  
Of sorrowing days, part of the vision made.

Gleams of the present, as to one who lies  
Half wakened at the breaking of the day  
Comes the faint knowledge of his dreamful guise,  
Through blinding vapor fought their devious way,  
To blend the froward vagaries of chance  
With the sure tint of outward circumstance.

For ere I slept a cold rain swept the earth  
In torrents, and an eager, biting wind  
Sprang from the east, and, lashing into froth  
The edges of the ocean, fierce and blind,  
In middle night, upon the roof and pane,  
With stern and icy knuckles knocked in vain.

And, passing on through inland villages,  
The storm that heaped the stony beach with foam,  
Shorn of its fury, lingered to caress  
The quivering aspen leaves, or like a gnome  
Rustling through forests and ripe fields of grain,  
With flimsy, trailing garments swept the plain.

But while in slumber's hermitage I lay,  
The clouds were broken by the veering wind  
That soon in moaning whispers died away;  
And edges of the rounded moon behind  
The dripping forest branches cast their small  
And feeble shafts against the chamber wall.

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HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

---

The morning sun himself, ere I awoke,  
With shining lances thinned the ranks of night;  
For, after deluge, clear the dawning broke  
Upon a joyous world, and filled with light  
The virgin fields, the avenues of men,  
And each dark place where darkness erst had been.

As he of whom the passing story 's told,  
Who, keeping urgent slumbers long at bay,  
Dipped his worn eyelids into water cold,  
And in the moment that embathed they lay  
A quick dream forced him from his study's door  
To seek the crowded thoroughfare once more —

There at the corner of the street he stood,  
And watched the slow procession gliding by  
Of mitred prelates and the mailed hood  
Of many a knight; the gold emblazonry  
Of silken banners rustled in his face,  
And merry, boisterous laughter filled the place.

Hour after hour the spearman's heavy tread  
And clanking armor rumbled in his brain,  
While far behind his arduous fancy fled  
To gather new delights, to swell the train,  
With gorgeous pageantry — a second's play —  
Ere from his eyes he plucked the bath away.

---

AND OTHER POEMS

---

As Mahomet, whose earthen pitcher fell,  
And, ere he caught it falling, Paradise  
Was the fair land where he had chanced to dwell,  
And his to gaze the softened amethyst skies,  
And touch with trembling feet the emerald floor,  
And breathe a golden air unfelt before —

So I, what hours in curtained sleep I lay,  
When sun and moon and starry influence  
With storm and peace, wind, silence, night and day,  
Conspired to reach and fill my sleeping sense,  
For time untold beneath their mingled spell,  
Throughout a wild, strange life did seem to dwell.

## MIDNIGHT

Hark! low in dim-lit midnight beautiful

The bulbul sings half to himself asleep;  
Dark shapes of palm leaves rustle; sounds that lull  
To the heart's core like cool nepenthe creep;  
And happy fragrance haunts each flowing cup  
That pleasure fills from past unkindness up.

A distant music the light zephyr brings,

Or is it in the caverns of the mind?  
Now quick, delightful laughter downward flings  
And out upon the platforms of the wind;  
And clear-cut echo, like a silver horn,  
Among the dusky foliage is born.

Beyond the stream, in lighted banquet halls,

With white uncovered arms by casements ope  
Slight figures pass, and noise of revel falls  
And flickering light on the green-glistening slope  
And winding water; all the dim night long  
The firefly, sparkling, floats the leaves among.

And all night long the bee, warm-nested, sleeps

Heart-deep in amaranth, and, dreaming, sips;  
While round the globe Aurora's cortege creeps  
To kiss too soon with its resplendent lips  
The pale façades, the minarets of gold,  
High set within the faint, delicious cold.

### PERCHANCE TO DREAM

An thou wouldst dream a pastoral of old  
Impassionate with grace of Grecian song,  
Pass the great city's gate, forsake the throng  
Of murmurous men and seek the empalèd wold;  
There, low betwixt the granite-mottled hills,  
Mid oak and alder, purls a stream along,  
Loneliest and loveliest of forgotten rills;  
The warm air trembles with the insects' chirr,  
For it is afternoon and midsummer, —  
Late afternoon when the red rose distils,  
The bee drones in the clover, and the vine  
That climbs the covert casts its shadow far.

Drink, thou, a chalice deep of ruby wine  
To calm and quite untense the cumbrous clay  
That holds thee in the clasp of yesterday;  
And sleep, — perchance to dream a dream divine.  
Turn thy face westward to the checkered sun,  
Thine arms a-pillow, that the softened ray  
Gladly may light thee to elysium.  
And now the tinkling stream transforms for thee:  
The silver timbrel of Terpsichore  
Floats through the pillars of the Pantheon;  
And this is Greece, and this the sacred grove  
About a temple in sweet Arcady.

And rising from that dream the ghost of Love  
Shall haunt thee with a faintness, and thine eyes  
Be dazed with beauty till the sunset skies  
Fade far into the night; the sun above,  
The murmuring stream, the summer-scented air,  
The cool, brown earth, — had stolen the disguise  
Of all their gods and met thee unaware.  
Earth, air, fire, water, whence all beauty is,  
From the white lily to the loveliness  
Of naked Aphrodite, held thee there  
In luminous enchantment; at thine ear  
The clustering muses did melodious press;  
The oreads swiftly whirling drave anear;  
The dryads slipped across the gold-green lawn,  
While trembled from afar the silver horn  
Of huntress Dian, musical and clear.

### THE STRANGER

Descending with the mountain stream,  
A stranger to the valley came.  
The river, like a sheet of flame,  
Blazed in the rising sun — a dream  
Of beauty seemed the verdant land.  
The forest spreading on each hand  
In myriad shades of living green,  
The dewy flowers so richly hued,  
The songs of joyous birds that rang  
In sharpest sweetness, and between  
The giant boles the trooping deer,  
Enraptured him; but, as he stood,  
Unconscious of a foe so near,  
An arrow from the thicket sprang  
And smote him fairly in the side;  
And in a moment more the wood  
Swarmed with wee flashes far and wide,  
The vicious gleams of bigot spite.  
Then, turning to the hills, he cried  
To them that followed where he led:  
"Come ye in brazen armor dight,  
Ere even this lovely land ye dare to tread."

## NO FRIEND LIKE THE OLD FRIEND

There is no friend like the old friend to make the fond  
heart bleed

When he meets you with a supercilious air,  
And his glancing eye assures you that he knows you've  
gone to seed,

And 'tis no more use for him to treat you fair.

Oh, his fine affected tone

As he talks with you alone,

And the patronizing cadence of his voice,

For the fool can scarce construe

The subjective strength in you,

Or he would not so pretentiously rejoice.

There is no friend like the old friend to make the fond  
heart sad,

As he turns away his head to see you not;

Forgetting all the favors from your hands that he has  
had,

'Tis so rich to cut you dead upon the spot.

Oh, his blank and stony glare,

Shot straight up into the air,

And the dignified demeanor of his back!

Ah, fool! beyond the days

Of his hypocritic praise,

Now dark Nemesis to call upon his track!

---

AND OTHER POEMS

---

There is no friend like the old friend to make the heart  
rejoice

When he grabs your toil-hard hand and hugs it tight.  
The old ring and the true ring in his well-remembered  
voice,

While his eyes are filled with manifest delight;

For he greets you with a shout,

Simulation all left out,

A hearty friend, a life-long friend, pure gold;

And he holds you long and late

With a force as strong as fate —

The bond of faithful friendship grand and old.

There is no friend like the old friend to drive dull care  
away,

To lift the laden breast and make it stout.

Like a burst of summer sunshine, his presence glads the  
day,

And puts the devils blue to utter rout.

For what's the odds to him

If your prospects yet are dim,

And the binding of your vest is worn and frayed?

Like a rock he stands by you

With a friendship warm and true

And a faithful sense of honor unbetrayed.

## BY THE LIGHT OF A SINGLE STAR

The study of the revolutions of the planet Mars first lead John Kepler's attention to the inaccuracies of the Ptolemaic system.

Full many a night, when far from home,  
Riding on devious roads along,  
On either hand the forest's gloom,  
And overhead a hurrying throng  
Of mottled clouds that, driving fast,  
Like shades of mighty monsters passed,  
All suddenly a gleam broke through,  
And then at once the way I knew  
By the light of a single star.

So men, in some deep science lost,  
Have bravely groped for further light  
To find each ancient scroll criss-crossed  
With hieroglyphics black as night;  
They, turning to the present, saw  
By some dim light the unknown law;  
For Kepler's self wrote large and clear  
The tablets of Urania  
By the light of a single star.

## LETHE

In fair Elysium a darker stream  
Than any other rolls its turbid way;  
Who drinks thereof shall only sleep and dream,  
Lose the remembrance of supernal day,  
And its faint subterfuge in visions find,  
The travesties of truth, though not in all unkind.

Its temples on the river border stand,  
Dim-shrined and choked; their many drowsy things  
On journeys are in some ideal land  
And, drunken deep from thick Lethean springs,  
Have quite forgot the old, and blindly seek  
Words of immortal life to think or vaguely speak.

Whoso shall drink of those cool chalices  
Feels quick enchantment tremble in his brain;  
Fails from his eyes the palace of past bliss,  
And noise of rustling leaves, or dropping rain,  
Or dip of oars in subterranean halls,  
Upon his darkened sense fades as it gently falls.

Sighs of the cypress through the portals wide  
And open casements may to him be blown;  
An odor of the climbing rose be guide  
To some past pleasance his true life hath known,  
Or streaming sunset on the jasper wall  
A semblance of Elysium's clear light recall.

A kiss of love upon his dreaming lips,  
Ere yet the draught all recollection dims,  
Forth brings a vision to his dull eclipse  
Of woman's smiling face and snow-white limbs.  
The ghost of pleasure thrills him, and his eyes  
Unclose a moment, — then in other dreams he dies.

Far off, as the deceitful years go on,  
Recedes all knowledge of his deeper life;  
Youth, beauty, love, and love of beauty gone,  
And scarred in soul and frame by toil and strife,  
He waits the coming end, and little cares  
When death, save for its pangs, shall take him unawares.

For death it seems: the living friends he had,  
Did they not sink to dust? or, growing old,  
Seek him no more? Cold, laughterless, and sad  
They meet if meet they must; the tale is told  
That gave to him delight, the song is past,  
And dull and deaf and lame he waits for death at last.

But nigh to his awakening, grave hints  
Of his enthrallment through the trance make way;  
Of what strange beauty do the twilight tints  
Remind him? At the breaking of the day  
What buoyant splendor? and the thick-starred night  
To him gives what remembrance of a past delight?

A perfumed breath, across the dewy fields,  
Steals through the darksome foliage and fills  
The inner air: the outworn potion yields;  
A deathly touch throughout his being thrills,  
And strange delight stirs in him — strange desire,  
As when the lily's bud unfolds to the sun's fire.

The dreaded death slips from him like a shroud;  
He feels his welcome in the amber air,  
Leaps to his feet and shouts for joy aloud;  
For this is Eden — Eden everywhere!  
Lo! through the casements those translucent skies!  
Is this not utmost Eden? this not Paradise?

The dreadful nightmare, writhing like a snake,  
Rolls into darkness, and is known no more;  
The cup was quaffed for pleasure's sacred sake,  
To happiness and hungry zest restore;  
Revivified, he greets with joyous eyes  
His blissful home regained — the Vale of Paradise.

'TWIXT MIDNIGHT AND THE MORN

Now the night grows still and dark  
And men sink to slumber,  
And the dog forgets to bark  
Save when his noisome dreams encumber;  
The frivolous, gay city yet  
Keeps her bright lamps burning;  
Of conquest dreams the rouged coquette;  
The drunkard on his bed is turning;  
But here in this deep solitude,  
Where lovely nature's self is reigning,  
How can the lips, from song abstaining,  
Forbear to wake the echoes of the wood?

Nay, I will steal adown the glade,  
Beside the trembling water,  
And quite so softly serenade  
The miller's only daughter  
That no sound will he hear at all,  
Save of a mill-wheel's whirring,  
Whilst on love's ivory gates shall fall  
The song of love unerring.

SONG

O come to me, my love!  
Rise from thy downy bed,  
And in the shadows of the grove  
Upon my bosom lay thy head;  
For the rose-perfumed gale  
Stirs in the pines aloft,  
And through the break in the mountains pale  
The moon is rising large and soft.  
The lake begins to burn  
With tremulous, bright splendor;  
All things to fairy magic turn  
At this new-born enchantment tender.  
Pluck from thy snowy nest  
Thy snowy form and slender,  
And flee unto a dearer rest  
Among the wreaths of clustered roses,  
Where love so lonely now reposes  
In his fond heart who surely loves thee best.

## THE COMMON THINGS THAT BE

It was not Hamlet played by Booth,  
Nor novel writ by Robert Barr,  
Nor Thaxter's "Love's First Dream" forsooth,  
Nor Verdi's sweetest aria,  
Nor any work of human art,  
Nor yet my love's endearing arms,  
That held me with a pleased heart  
Enchanted in a land of charms.

What then? A wide, pale-azure sky,  
O'er which a thousand dainty sprays  
Of autumn rift slow drifted by,  
Upon the goldenest of days.  
It was the god, Reality,  
I gazed upon, — the conqueror  
That haunts the common things that be,  
And mocks the mystic maul of Thor.

And still I wondered that for me,  
Who for so many years have seen  
Blue sky, white clouds, a joy should be  
So tranquil and so vast between  
The zenith and horizon; yet I knew  
The source of pleasure, dreamed it oft,  
Star-gazing at the depths night-blue,  
Or when the rain beat on the loft.

---

AND OTHER POEMS

---

Hail to the common things that be!  
The sound of rain upon the roof,  
The rose, the wild anemone,  
The rhythm of the horse's hoof,  
The scent of piny forests, glow  
Of autumn's tinted foliage,  
The smooth and slumbrous fields of snow,  
Familiar things — man's heritage.

Give to the water, fire, or wind  
Your thousand thousand tomes of lore.  
The metaphysics of the blind  
Create within your souls no more.  
And then what Love is, and what Truth,  
And what is Beauty, ye shall know;  
For happiness betwixt and ruth  
The choice were, did we make it so.

## THE THUNDERSTORM

One summer dawn the sun unshrouded rose  
Above a breathless ocean, and the day  
Grew hot and sultry at this bright morn's close;  
At noon the steadfast heat held boundless sway,  
And silence, like an ever-brooding dream,  
In sun and shadow, hung o'er wood and stream.

The thirsty cattle sweltered in the shade;  
The withered corn and parching verdure sighed  
For the cool moisture of the lonely glade,  
Or cold mist of the broad incoming tide;  
The wide sand of the beaches sparkled dry,  
As over all the glowing sun climbed high.

But, when the fierceness of the noon bore down,  
Low in the west a gathering of the host  
Of summer clouds in white-fleeced splendor shone;  
Snow-capped were they, as on a distant coast  
Stand ice-bound mountains; deep at base they grew,  
As swift and high their summits heaved in view.

And they that love the glory of the storm

Turned with rapt faces to the deepening sky,  
Where far-off thunder rumbled low and long;

While rumpled corn, and grass, and woodland nigh,  
Thrilled by expectant change, a moment swayed,  
Then, hushed in calm, a deeper stillness made.

Now were the westward hills and forests drowned

In rainy mist, and dim to mortal eyes  
Grew the white-shining stream and sunlit ground;

But grandeur filled the everlasting skies —  
A strange and shuddering beauty — as the broad  
Black belt bore up that archangelic horde.

The sun went out; low moaned the frightened sea.

And flurried birds skimmed close upon the sand,  
And screaming gulls across the foam did flee,

While wildest tumult struck the darkened land;  
A mighty wind bore down the sapling oak,  
And crackling through the thick-set forest broke.

The fisher, wetted by the first big drops,

Fled to his home with more than wonted speed;  
For sharp about those cloud-wrought mountain tops

The keen, swift, glancing fire began to breed,  
And loud approaching thunder and dark rain  
Swept gloomily along heaven's gray campaign.

---

HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

---

Now burst the whirling torrent, blent with hail;  
And on the roof and drizzling window-pane  
The strong and blinding gusts beat like a flail,  
While roaring from the gutters streamed the rain,  
And sharp, incessant lightning dazed the eye,  
And deep, appalling thunder rolled on high.

The storm sank down into the east; the day  
Broke forth again, and jewelled nature smiled  
Through bounteous tears — so passed her wrath away;  
And on the sea the colored rainbow mild  
Glowed for a space, then faded into air,  
And left no trace to prove the day less fair.

But all night long, at the horizon's rim,  
To wakeful eyes a sudden glance of white  
Might now and then appear, and rumbling dim,  
Betwixt the pauses of the zephyrs light,  
When scarce the tendrils of the ivy stirred,  
Above the countless insects' cry, be heard.

### THE VILLAGERS

Alas ! too peaceful are the shadowy lanes,  
Too crystal clear the river's flowing tide,  
To match malevolence. The very fanes,  
As idly on the hillocks they abide,  
Seem conscious of their creeds — are rivals all —  
And wait and watch to see each other fall.

There Sisyphus, the laborer, rolls the stone  
Up to the summit of the long steep hill,  
And dreams at night his servitude foregone,  
To find at morn the task recurring still;  
For thickly sown, like thistles wide and far,  
The worthless laws of useless labor are.

There Tantalus himself, as in the tale,  
Stoops down in haste to drink the stream of bliss  
With such desire as makes the fountain fail;  
Or strives to clutch the fruit he needs must miss,  
Though now again it rolls unto his feet,  
The more by interdiction rendered sweet.

---

HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

---

Contention and the myriad-handed ways

Of labor hold them down that life may pass  
Unknown, unnoted till the end of days —

The quiet time when flesh shall be as grass,  
And overhead the wandering kine shall thrive  
Where no dead man can wish himself alive.

But yet some mood of nature snaps the charm

That binds them thoughtless, and with hearts aglow  
They mark the flash and fury of the storm,

Or the still midnight of star-smitten snow,  
Or yet the bright blaze of the sunset when  
A spirit moves among the sons of men.

And vague desire stirs in them to know all —

To know of life and death for good or ill,  
And by the great law solved unmask the small,

To find the common secret that doth fill  
The red familiar rose with fragrance — learn  
What strange delight doth in the sunset burn.

NOVEMBER 'S COME

At night the leaves across the fields are tossed,  
Ere yet the melancholy twilight dies ;  
And brown October like a withered ghost  
Along the ochre-streaked horizon flies.  
A drizzle follows her of sorrowing rain,  
And night shuts down and it is cold again.  
Come, start the fire and let the chimney roar,  
November 's come and summer smiles no more.

Take from the shelf the volume of your heart,  
And once again its crumpled pages con ;  
Perchance a poet's book where subtle art  
Has there transfixed the summer eve or morn ;  
Or yet perchance some history of old  
Dealing in deeds of warriors great and bold,  
When brave Camillus through burnt Rome did ride,  
As leopard-like his army crouched outside.

Or let the chatter of French voices fill  
The room, and laughter of Parisiens,  
From some bright Gallic writer's golden quill,  
Where life, portrayed as through a crystal lens  
Magnific, gives its secrets to the eye,  
And you may see as all the world goes by,  
Each mood and motive, every cause laid bare,  
The hidden springs of actions foul or fair.

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HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

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And then to rest — no, sit awhile and dream  
Above the dying embers, of the time  
When life like Cleopatra's barge did seem,  
Upon the Nile in Egypt's summer clime,  
Freighted with all things rare and glorious,  
Now stripped of amorous gaiety profuse,  
And hauled in shore to crumble and decay.  
November 's come, and youth has passed away.

## THE MARSEILLAISE

Rouget de Lisle, a young soldier stationed at Strasburg, became intimate with a certain family in that city, and spent much of his time at the house. One night, in the winter of 1792, De Lisle and his host drank the last bottle of wine in the cellar. On retiring to his room, heated by wine and inspired by the stirring events of the revolution, he composed the immortal hymn, words and music. It was not until morning, after a deep sleep, that, recalling his production with difficulty, he transferred it from his brain to paper.

"De Lisle, my friend, this is the end of all;  
The cellar's empty, — here's to fame and thee!"  
"Nay, rather pledge fair France and Liberty  
In this last bottle." Scarce a lone footfall  
Resounded in the street; the night was late,  
And Strasburg city slept; but sleepless fate  
Stirred in the soldier's heart, and fervid wine  
Filled his quick brain with music's power divine.

Up stairs he crept, but not to bed; the sky  
Was starry cold, and from his window he  
Might gaze upon the heavenly panoply  
Beneath which Strasburg's outlines dim did lie.  
Nor stars nor city claimed the eyes that looked  
Within where wine and music wildly strove  
In rivalry, and endless visions flocked  
Of martial glory; a mad battle drove  
Throughout his heated brain; battalions passed  
With deep drum-beat and fiery bugle-blast.

Then on his harpsichord 'gan he to play,  
No old familiar theme rehearsed before,  
But some strange thing wherein the spirit lay  
Of revolution. What wild melody,  
What stirring music, filled his heart! the roar  
Of heavy batteries, the clash of steel,  
And the loud tocsin clanging peal on peal.

Music and wine outworn, sleep conquered both;  
He slept a heavy sleep, and woke to find  
The city stirring, while the vague outgrowth  
Of some lost splendor lingered on his mind;  
And, 'mid the noises of the busy street,  
The rattling cart, the horse's clattering feet,  
With eager joy he struggled to recall  
Its haunting grandeur, till remembrance fleet  
Poured back its thrilling numbers one and all.

In after days, all Europe, roused to arms  
To quench the martial fury of that song,  
Fell back aghast; for valiantly and strong  
It bore the glistening bayonets along  
Of 'leaguered France throughout a thousand storms.  
And many a tyrant trembled at the strain  
When, borne from far upon the battle's breath,  
Surged the dread music of that bold refrain:  
"March on! March on! to Liberty or death!"

### THE DARK BLUE SEA

I, who was born in sight of heaven  
And of the dark blue sea,  
Love both; but chief to me is given  
To praise the ocean free.  
In calm or storm, in sweet sunshine,  
In moonlight tender and divine,  
At morn or eve, the deep, cold brine  
Is all the same to me.

When out upon an inland road,  
On top of each high hill  
I gaze across the country broad.  
And, straining eastward still,  
I try to find in its old place  
The ocean's fair, familiar face,  
But only mists mine eyes can trace  
That far-off valleys fill.

Then, with a stifled breath, I turn,  
And down the hillside stray,  
Where autumn's crimson fire-lights burn,  
And beauty gilds the day;  
But miss what that Greek soldier who  
Hailed from the Archipelago,  
In Tempe's valley lacked — the blue  
Of ocean far away.

## LOVE AND WAR

Come!

Why separate yourself from me  
When youthful blood in both of us  
Flows like a fountain full and free?  
Ah! what is it that stirs you thus?  
The music of the rolling drum  
Blood of your race to battle calls,  
To battle calls; but think of this:  
In foremost fight the hero falls,  
And I am here to kiss and kiss.  
See, as the sunset gilds my hair,  
Am I not sweet? am I not fair?  
Is not my bosom ripe and warm?  
Let those go hence who have not me,  
Whose hearts are wild with misery  
And hopeless yearning for the charm  
Of some loved woman's supple form.  
Let youths, too callow yet to feel  
Love's reckless ecstasy; let boys  
Who have scant knowledge of the joys  
Of intertwining passion, — go  
And press their hearts against the steel;  
Or those who now are surfeited  
And past their prime, and Venus-fed

So long they fain would turn to Mars  
For wholesome change, — let their blood flow  
In these accursed intestine wars.

But you and I were planned to mate,  
Passioned and powered to re-create.  
So to fulfil the bond of clay  
Enjoined by long heredity,

My willing shape must yield to you.  
Your strength, your beauty, your desire,  
Must be as fuel to the fire

That every day breaks out anew.  
This is the universal law.

Take, then, what is by fate your due.  
My form your form was fashioned for;  
And what affection I can give  
To nurse desire belongs to you,  
That human life may never cease to live.

## MOONRISE

Now comes the rising moon!  
The tender light  
Of the summer night  
Streams up the pearly eastern sky, and soon  
Diana's quivering arrows strike the chill  
Dusk headlands, and the night begins to fill  
With mystical delight.

The glistening leaves, like many twinkling eyes  
Of merry sprites,  
Turn swiftly and reverse,  
Blown by the breeze that joins the bright moonrise.  
The dim half-lights  
To sharp, thin, silver arrows change, and pierce  
Responsive hearts with some emollient balm  
That cools the fevered pulse and keeps it calm.

Moonlight and music fill the world to-night!  
The perfumed rose  
Its fragrance throws  
Upon the cool, soft breeze that in delight  
Ruffles the feathers of the fern, and flees  
Across the lake's indifferent repose  
To break the lucid shadows of the trees.

### THE MYSTIC

To one among the race whose tireless feet  
Must press this weary footstool year by year  
Came the rich summer with a grace more sweet,  
Flushed pensive autumn with a blush more dear,  
Than to the others; nor with voice less kind  
Or drearier bodings swept the winter wind.

To him the wood flower seemed a fairer cup  
Than daintiest goblet carved in florid gold;  
More wealth the yellow sunset hoarded up  
Than bursting treasure-houses might enfold;  
Beloved of nature, and, in fair return,  
His heart for her like a still fire did burn.

The sad, incessant music of the sea  
Had charmed his life: the hates of mortal men  
Touched him far off; each hideous quality  
Was but a word vague as the sunlight when  
The ocean mist hath compassed wood and stream,  
And earth and air are but a ghostly dream.

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HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

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And, judging men the least, like one who sees  
The far pure flame rest on a sunset peak,  
While near at hand, beneath the rocking trees,  
Sit song and mirth he doth not think to seek,  
At intervals his hungry reason caught  
From awful heights a clear and wondrous thought.

As one who rests upon the mountain top  
While in the sky above drifts many a cloud,  
And one by one the misty vapors drop  
To clothe the valley with a fleecy shroud,  
Save one green spot where lingers the sunshine  
On home's brown cottage roof and trellised vine.

A moment, and the light ascends on high;  
The vale is misty dark; familiar scenes  
Are now but memories; the open sky,  
The cold clear splendor of the sun's demesnes,  
Stretched idly overhead, seem nearer far  
To him whose only light and hope they are.

Soon in the west the rich red glory dies  
Above the sinking sun; the stars appear —  
A myriad of gentle wondering eyes  
Each pensive, trembling with a silver tear;  
And shadowy fancies deepen the twilight,  
And fairy whispers fill the fairy night.

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AND OTHER POEMS

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The foolish gibe and narrow jest that seek  
The pleasure of an hour forgotten lie;  
Far off the world of transient mortals weak  
Is hushed in sleep, while on the jewelled sky  
And near at hand in living outlines burn  
The unknown ciphers of the Life Etern.

Thus he, the mystic, unaware of earth,  
Its stupid hatreds and its brutal fears,  
Almost within another world had birth —  
The crystal essence of the solid spheres,  
Intangible, and yet it walls us round,  
Wherein (he dreamed) all wisdom might be found.

JOHN KEATS

Now, sometimes, as the generations pass  
In slow precision underneath the sun,  
As they will do until the day is done,  
And this dear earth is frozen dead, alas!  
A man and woman meet so finely wrought,  
Reciprocal, that from their union springs  
That strangest, that divinest of rare things —  
A soul that hath the fire of beauty caught  
In such a way, so sure, so deep, so true,  
That by mere words it can the charm transmit  
And thrill, excite, and glorify anew  
The human heart in harmony with it,  
Exalt the soul in unison that beats:  
Thou art the man! thou hast that wild bewildering power,  
John Keats!

BY THE STREAM

A grizzly Bacchanalian am I,  
Fond of the fiery fount, proud of the blame;  
Low-crouch'd beneath a fleece-edged summer sky,  
At the calm river's brink I heedless lie,  
And in a dream the dizzy bank swims by;  
While overhead the sun in golden flame  
Measures the glistening day and gladdens all,  
And turns to fire  
The vane upon the spire,  
And makes a planet of the gilded ball.

Now let the shrewd world-monger set his snare,  
The meadow-spider scheme, I little care;  
The genial weather warms, the day is fair,  
And, while I lounge full length in meadow grass,  
As many days have done, so may this pass.

One more discreet libation to the gods,  
Youth, Beauty, Courage! — just as good and Greek  
As Kypria and the rest; for what's the odds?  
Were they not worshipped then as now, when meek  
Their ancient names were whispered at the pyre  
By those old humbugs of the sacred fire?

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HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

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Here's to the — What! a vision! from the brink  
A face peers up at me — 'tis Bacchus sure!  
No — certes, he was not a water god,  
Nor was Silenus, that old epicure  
Whom it resembles, — ruddy-nosed, and sown  
With blotches, 'tis the reflex of my own!

Across this marsh-land, two — three — miles away,  
The clustering village shows its white façades,  
And, rising from the elm and maple shades,  
The church spire climbs; below, the bright, still day  
Scarce filters through the leaves, and quiet gloom  
Broods on each mossy grave and checkered tomb;  
There sleeps the one who by this river's bank  
Loitered with me full many a time and oft,  
While in the west day's flaming splendor sank,  
And left to us the twilight calm and soft.  
Ah! I was Bacchus then; the river's flood  
Threw back no bloated satyr; I have stood  
Here, in this very spot, and felt my blood  
Warm with the pulse of youth, and stir with pride  
At our bright twin reflections in the tide.

The tools lie idle on the meadowy lawn,  
The hay unraked must meet the dews of night;  
The sun slopes down.  
Too late — too late — for labor or delight!

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AND OTHER POEMS

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But I will lie and dream — perchance of her —  
As once I dreamed,  
And 'woke to find her shadowy kisses all  
In me a sadness strange begin to stir.  
Low down a melancholy sunset streamed,  
The woods were sounding with the birds' last call,  
And slow the gathering mist began to fall  
On field and stream, while, just above the sedge  
A single star touched the horizon's edge.

VENUS

Sweeter than Houris' faces seem  
In dreams of Eden, when the night  
Grows late, and Love, behind the dream,  
Pours on his pale purpureal light,  
Is Love himself, and sweeter far  
Than Love himself his mother is, —  
The morning's blush, the twilight star,  
The crown of all incarnate bliss.

The morning's blush, the twilight star!  
When first the boy's fond heart awakes  
He sees the glimmer from afar  
And lo! the Morn of Venus breaks;  
A decade and a half of night,  
Then rosy colors flood the skies;  
The mad, the passionate lovelight  
Now greets him with its great surprise.

The morning's blush, the twilight star!  
When old is he and past his prime,  
And ashen-pale his passions are,  
Sweet memories of olden time  
Enchant him; even in his sleep  
Haunt him the lips that he hath pressed,  
And phantoms of his first love deep  
Fall in a faint upon his breast.

JULY

Ah, grand — the Lion-haunted days!  
In fury breaks the sea;  
The cold northeaster sweeps the ways;  
The wind drives fast and free;  
The sapling forest swells and sways  
And bends and twists in glee.

Last night upon no milder eve  
The sun went ever down.  
A great storm none could well believe  
Lurked in the twilight's frown,  
That makes the ocean whirl and heave  
And wakes and shakes the town.

To-night the wind blows down the brake  
To let the Lion pass;  
To-morrow might a hot sun bake  
Upon the yellowed grass,  
And the soft souther gently rake  
A sea of splintered glass.

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HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

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The revolutionary hour  
When men can stir and feel  
Is now; the Frenchman owned its power,  
And stormed the grim Bastile;  
The Yankee faced an iron shower  
To found the commonweal.

For, when the sun slacks in his heat,  
Then thunder thrills the air;  
The lightnings chase the hail and sleet,  
And strife rules everywhere.  
It is the time for drums to beat,  
And men to do and dare.

## I'D RATHER WATCH THE BUMBLE BEE

Any poet who has in him the making of a successful human-animal painter in verse should resist all the wooing of oaks and rills and pools and sylvan dells . . . . and all that sort of thing.— WILLIAM B. CHISHOLM, *Home Journal*, December 29.

They tell us we must leave the wood,  
The mead, the stream, the hazel glen,  
And stir the broth of bad and good  
Among the muddy hearts of men;  
To be august, superior,  
Must sing the song of love and hate,  
And pipe the praise of men of war,  
And sound the depths of human fate.  
Ah, well-a-day! — but not for me  
The soul-anatomist's great part;  
I'd rather watch the bumble bee  
Suck honey from the clover's heart.

I am so indolent. The sun  
Goes down amid an orange sky;  
The stars of silver, one by one,  
Spring forward in the heavens high;  
The night wind whispers in the pine,  
While far away the whippoorwill

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HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

---

Its melancholy strain divine  
Chants for a moment and is still;  
And could I give this sound and sight,  
To thrill the heart's inflowing tide  
And flood the chalice of delight,  
Full well would I be satisfied.

Let others strum pathetic tunes  
Upon the heart-strings of the race,  
But I will sing the languid noons  
Of summer in a shady place.  
The earth is older than the man,  
And better loved; the stream is old,  
So let me muse the poem's plan  
Beside its waters deep and cold:  
Lie down in easeful reverie,  
Leagues outward from the brawling mart,  
And watch the drowsy bumble bee  
Suck honey from the clover's heart.

IN STILL OCTOBER

Again I lie upon the moss and view the shining river,  
And the landscape changing slow from red and gold  
to brown;  
Once more I gaze across the stream that not a breath  
doth shiver,  
Along the rock-ribbed pasture lands towards the distant town;  
While the day grows old and chill, too soon to be the past  
forever,  
And on another wasted hour the sun sinks slowly down.  
down.

And I — I worshipped at this virgin shrine of nature  
Where never sail hath shone; and I have studied over  
Of this once lovely scene each fair and winning feature,  
Each crannied rock and tendrilled plant, as might an  
ardent lover  
Impress upon his heart as on a camera  
His mistress' form and face and every grace — the  
fond idolator!

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HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

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But now the dryad haunts are bared unto Apollo's  
arrows;  
Each shadowy dell of brake and fern the woodman's  
axe hath shorn:  
Heaps of dry brush and broken limbs choke those en-  
chanted barrows  
Where the gray rock and clinging vine were hidden  
from the sun;  
And what should be the mighty wood a sad decadence  
narrows,  
And on another wasted hope the sun sinks slowly down.

## THE RIVER

Through the valley green the winding river flows,  
The river broad and fair and clear as crystal light:  
The fond familiar scene my heart rejoicing knows.  
'Tis here we came to share our youthful pleasures  
bright.

How pleasant 'tis once more to gaze across the stream  
Where the rose-trellised homes hide half amid the  
trees!  
From that enchanted shore the lights begin to gleam,  
As twilight softly comes and brings the sunset breeze.

And lo! the rising moon her rosy circle shows  
Above the spindling corn that skirts the eastern sky;  
The same old sorcerer's tune its strange enchantment  
throws  
This fresh moonrise upon as in the years passed by.

The shadow of the bridge slants far into the stream,  
And through each ragged span the glistening water  
shows;  
While far upon the ridge, paled by the moon's bright  
gleam,  
From some abode of man a faint red spark yet glows.

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HERE'S LUCK TO LORA

---

Let him who would unveil the charm whence beauty flows  
Learn this from his own heart, a lesson true and plain,  
Not the exotic pale but the red familiar rose  
Can most delight impart and more of love retain.

So this familiar scene that little can compare  
With the grandeur of the Rhine or Italia's sunny bays,  
Is clothed in brighter sheen, a lovelier smile doth wear,  
For me than those sights divine that raptured poets  
praise.

IN SLEEP

My darling sleeps: the warning light  
Blends her sweet face with rose and pearl,  
And softly tints her raiment white,  
And golden hair of briefest curl;  
Waft, O, Wind, through portals wide,  
Delicious tones of music deep,  
That these in melody may guide  
The visions of her dreaming sleep.

The bleat of lambs, the cuckoo's cry,  
The fragrance of the full-blown rose,  
All of sweet sound or perfume nigh,  
Into her dream of summer flows;  
Love's melancholy self enwove  
Amid her yearning thoughts may be;  
Her graceful arms outstretched with love  
Prove she is dreaming soft of me.

Waft, O, Wind, the hunter's horn  
That blows from off a distant scarp,  
A melancholy echo born  
As from a far Aeolian harp;  
Waft, O, Wind, to her warm nest  
The quiet murmur of the sea,  
While her deep sighs and moving breast  
Prove she is dreaming soft of me.

NOVEMBER

When swept November through those orchards brown,  
Cool month of melancholy eventides,  
The last sear remnant of the leaves blew down  
To sweep stiff-blown on balmy oceansides;  
And clearer shone the stars when the still night  
Displaced the windy day: the misty light

Of summer was no more; the flowers were dead.  
But in the cheerly grate a bulb of fire  
Eclipsed the roses of Damascus red;  
The insect-voice was mute that did conspire  
To ease the August night of lassitude,  
But in the brilliant rooms a merry brood,

With dance and music and side-splitting mirth,  
Chased the imp dullness down the wintry way,  
Laughed care beyond the purlieus of the earth  
So deep into the night that rising day  
Oft showed her faint streaks at the ocean's rim  
Ere the bright banquet halls grew cold and dim.

ALDER BERRIES

When the year grows old and bare,  
And no verdure anywhere,  
Save the dark perennial pine,  
Survives to keep the forest fair,  
Then, as far as eye can see,  
Dingy sward and leafless tree,  
Barren rock and shrunken mead,  
With the snakelike twisted vine,  
Concur to make the gloomy landscape grim indeed.

But here and there along the lanes,  
And in the bushy pasture lands,  
The straight and slender alder stands,  
And with a crimson glory reigns;  
And the eye is glad to find  
That yet the falling year retains  
A glimpse of generous summer left behind  
To brighten the dim earth through all her frozen rains.

So may we all of us,  
When the fire of youth is dead,  
And the days grown dolorous  
Leave pleasure's zest to go unfed,  
Have somewhat yet to mend the time,  
Something of pleasance ripened late,  
A savor of the summer's prime,  
An oasis of the waste, an antidote to Fate.

## THE FRAGRANCE OF THE FOREST

The scent of the lilac pale  
And the fragrance of the rose  
Are sweet and the same is the perfumed gale  
That across the clover blows;  
The pink with a delicate touch  
Of redolence fresh is imbrued,  
But sweeter and dearer than such  
Is the smell of the piny wood.

When an orange sunset burns  
Low down in the dreamy west,  
And the silver twilight turns  
To ashen gray and the tranquil rest  
Of the night creeps over the hills  
And the stars peep out, a pensive brood,  
In the gathering gloom distils  
The smell of the piny wood.

An essence too subtle and fine  
To be mocked by the alchemist's craft  
Is the leaf-laden breath divine  
That the winds of October waft;  
Old thoughts and old memories fond,  
At its magic come back in a golden flood,  
For a touch of the fairies' wand  
Is the smell of the piny wood.

MNEMOSYNE

As I gazed across the village  
In the downfall of the day, —  
The village that I loved so well  
Ere youth had passed away, —  
I remembered — I remembered —  
O Wind of Memory!  
Why dost thou stir the glassy blur  
Of a dead and bitter sea?

Ah! it was he — Great Morris —  
Who knew what siren song  
It were to not remember  
Each dark and deadly wrong,  
Each cutting lie, each false reply,  
That Discord doth let slip  
To part the cherished friends of youth  
And the bond of Fellowship.

And yet — 'twere better for the race  
To suffer and be wise  
Than not to still remember well  
The test of truth and lies,  
Than be the fey and easy prey  
Of all the scattered schools,  
Nor know where ignorance is bliss  
'Tis folly to be fools.

## THE OLD HOUSE

An habitation gray, whose moss-grown roof  
Old Time hath crispt, stands like a sentinel  
Upon the shore, from others far aloof;  
So old that of its builders none can tell,  
Or of the year when first its timbers hewn  
Lay, long slim ghosts of oak below the moon.

The washing tides of many a nameless year  
Have worn the shelvy non-resistant silt,  
Crept up with foaming feet near and more near,  
Until the feeble barrier first built  
By changeful nature lies a sloping beach  
That from the door-stone to the waves doth reach.

Up that wide sand each lonesome sunny day  
Slips the clear water with the rising tide,  
And with the falling slowly ebbs away;  
Nor long in idleness can well abide,  
But with returning strength crawls up once more  
To whelm the long and barren reach of shore.

And now dwells there not one inhabitant  
Where once blithe words and merry laughter gay  
Resounded, and the cheerful sun aslant  
Through casements ope lit up gold heads and gray;  
Where pleasure thrilled, or boundless passion came  
To fire young eyes with hues of sunset flame.